

^AiSTs'S'] [HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.] *NOSCE
TEIPSUM!* 143

And yet, alas, when all our lamps are burned.
Our bodies wasted, and our spirits spent;
When we have all the learned volumes
turned[^] Which yield men's wits, both help
and ornament:

What can we know ? or what can we
discern ? When Error chokes the
windows of the Mind ; The divers Forms
of things, how can we learn, That have
been, ever from our birthday, blind ?

When Reason's lamp (which, like the sun in
sky,
Throughout man's little world, her beams
did spread) Is now become a Sparkle;
which doth lie Under the ashes, half
extinct, and dead.

How can we hope, that through the Eye
and Ear, This dying Sparkle, in this
cloudy place, Can re-collect these beams
of knowledge clear, Which were infused
in the first minds, by grace ?

So might the heir, whose father hath,
in play, Wasted a thousand
pounds of ancient rent; By painful
earning of one groat a day, Hope
to restore the patrimony spent.

The wits that dived most deep, and soared
most high,
Seeking man's powers, have found his
weakness such ; " Skill comes so slow ! and
life so fast doth fly ! " " We learn so little,
and forget so much ! "

For this, the wisest of all moral men
Said, *He knew nought, but that he nought
did know !* And the great mocking
Master, mocked not then, When he said,
Tmih was buried deep below !

For how may we, to other's things attain,
When none of us, his own Soul
understands ? For which, the Devil
mocks our curious brain, When,
Know thyself! his oracle commands.